



**CALFED
BAY-DELTA
PROGRAM**

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November 12, 1997

Wayne S. White, Field Supervisor
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
3310 El Camino Avenue, Suite 130
Sacramento, CA 95821-6340

Dear Wayne:

Thank you for your letter of September 18, 1997 identifying environmental effects of potential reservoir sites. As you know, the process for evaluation and screening of potential reservoir projects is being conducted by an interagency, multidisciplinary team drawn from CALFED participating agencies. USFWS concerns and supporting information have been presented to the members of the screening committee for consideration as the screening process is developed and applied. However, it may be premature in the screening process for the committee to eliminate sites with potentially unmitigable environmental effects from further consideration in the Program.

The committee has reached consensus on using two stages to screen reservoir alternatives. In the first stage the committee will identify and eliminate impracticable alternatives. Criteria for elimination include minimum potential storage size, direct conflict with CALFED's restoration programs, engineering feasibility and economic considerations. In the second stage, performed at the DEIR/DEIS level, the committee will evaluate alternatives based on combined detailed engineering and environmental analyses. The committee will make recommendations on which sites should be evaluated in more detail during Phase III of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program.

As recommended by USFWS, alternatives that have potential for a high degree of environmental impacts will be "red flagged" during the initial screening to acknowledge that high costs for mitigation, or unmitigable impacts might be expected. These impacts will be studied in more detail at the next level of screening to more accurately evaluate mitigation issues. I expect that the screening process will be iterative as acknowledged in the 404(b)(1) Guidelines. Results of each cycle of analysis will likely lead to reexamination of previous steps to assure that the final screening results are logical, fair and fully responsive to available technical information.

CALFED Agencies

California
The Resources Agency
Department of Fish and Game
Department of Water Resources
California Environmental Protection Agency
State Water Resources Control Board

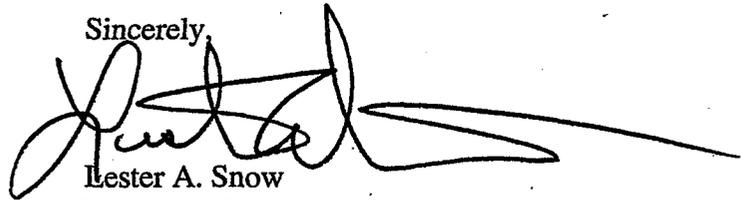
Federal
Environmental Protection Agency
Department of the Interior
Fish and Wildlife Service
Bureau of Reclamation
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Department of Commerce
National Marine Fisheries Service

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Thank you for your staff's active participation in this screening process. If you have any questions, please contact Sergio Guillen of my staff at (916) 653-3072.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lester A. Snow", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Lester A. Snow
Executive Director